

SUBJECT: Questions and Answers for Admiral Turner's
Confirmation Hearings

This constitutes Tab C in the OLC submission. It consists of questions and suggested answers for the Admiral's consideration, in preparation for the confirmation hearings.

There are four general sections:

- A. Personal questions, for most of which the Admiral may best provide his own answers.
- B. Questions on intelligence generally, and the Intelligence Community
- C. Questions relating to the CIA
- D. Questions relating to the Congress.

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Why do you feel that you are qualified to assume the responsibilities of Director of Central Intelligence?

Do you see any potential conflict of interest in your serving as DCI and your holding any of your present financial interests?

If requested by this Committee, on the basis of conflict of interest, will you divest yourself of any assets?

Your predecessor has stated that the Director of Central Intelligence must be someone who has the trust and confidence of and direct access to the President. Reports have indicated that you and President Carter were not even acquainted while at the Naval Academy, and your careers have certainly diverged since then. What would encourage this Committee to believe that you have the trust and confidence of, and direct access to, the President?

During your Naval career you have appeared to be a fairly prolific writer. While these articles have been both thoughtful and topical, I would like to ask if you intend to continue this practice while serving as the DCI?

Will your Naval background present problems for you in taking an objective position on important matters such as relative U.S. and Soviet Naval strength, the strategic balance of forces, etc., about which you wrote recently in Foreign Affairs? Will your long service in the military cause any problems for you in dealing with civilian agencies? Will your military background affect your ability to work with other branches of the service in the DCI's role as coordinator of the Intelligence Community?

After more than 30 years in the Navy, you are no doubt comfortable working with military officers. Do you believe that there should be more military persons in positions of authority in the CIA or the Intelligence Community staff? If so, why?

Published reports have indicated that your military colleagues have admired your skills as a manager, skills surely required by the person in the position of the DCI. Would you describe your managerial experience? How well-prepared do you feel that this makes you to preside over organizations as unique and complex as the CIA and the Intelligence Community, which put a premium on independence of judgment and initiative and are heavily civilian in makeup?

You have been quoted as saying that you would rather make 50 decisions of which 30 were right than make 25 decisions, all of them right. That suggests you would accept a 40 percent rate of failure. Can the CIA, the President, and the country really tolerate a 40 percent rate of failure in the performance of its Director of Central Intelligence? Should it? Why not make fewer, and better, decisions?

ANSWER: Let me assure this Committee that I appreciate the concern that that quote may have evoked. I quite agree that the DCI cannot have a 40 percent rate of failure of decision and I would make every effort to insure that I would not. To support me I would have the benefit of excellent advice and counsel from my associates.

You know, Admiral, that we civilians are traditionally wary of career military men in high government office. Sometimes such officers, used to the order and discipline of the military life, seem to show an impatience or insensitivity with the arguments and the confusion and disorder that sometimes accompanies the civilian processes of this society and this government, including those of the Congress and the Intelligence Community. In an editorial signed by you in the January-February 1974 issue of the Naval War College Review, on the first anniversary of the return of our prisoners of war from Vietnam, you note that: "Past fixations on Vietnam and the resultant antimilitary domestic turmoil have abated. The 'public' has proven to have a short attention span...." I'm bothered by what might appear to be a rather cavalier attitude on your part toward the "public". Would you give us some clarification? For example, do you think the "public" has a short attention span relative to the Soviet Union, or the CIA?

ANSWER: Let me reassure you, Senator, as best I can that I fully respect the problems and values of the civilians of this country and government. I think that the U.S. public has shown a sustained and healthy appreciation of the Soviet Union and its power since the Second World War, and I think that is most appropriate. For the CIA, I would hope that the public, and the Congress, would appreciate that the problems and mistakes of the past are gone but not forgotten, and I pledge that they would not be repeated under my tenure as DCI.

In your Foreign Affairs article, you comment as follows on detente: "Detente has been misinterpreted by some as a license to drop national security issues entirely, except when pursuing the transfer of funds from defense to areas of social and economic concern." Does that indicate that you oppose the policy of detente, that you have little faith in the effort to reach a peaceful accommodation with the Soviet Union? And are you against trying to meet social and economic needs which cry out for solutions in this country and go to the heart of the whole purpose of the United States?

ANSWER: The answer is no to both questions. Let me emphasize that as DCI I would not be a policy-maker. If the CIA and the Intelligence Community do their work well, they provide the basis for the judgments of our U.S. policy-makers on detente and the needs of our defense establishment. And it is from a basis of such informed judgment that the policy-makers can then decide how best to meet the needs of the country. For the policy-makers, it is a question of balance. Good intelligence provides an irreplaceable element in determining that balance. My purpose as DCI would be to help insure the highest quality of that element.

Referring again to your Foreign Affairs article and the matter of U.S. military strength as compared with the Soviets': In response to the question: "Who's ahead, Admiral?", you asked two questions in turn: "What do you mean by 'ahead'", and "How far ahead will suit you, for foreign policy purposes?" How do you answer those questions now?

ANSWER: I would leave those questions for others to answer, if I may. The matter of what "ahead" may mean and how far ahead will suit the U.S. is clearly for the President and the Congress to answer. As DCI, I would try to insure that the CIA and the Intelligence Community provide the best answers they can to the questions asked by the policy-makers, such as what potential adversaries are doing in research and development, and what strategy and tactics they may be undertaking or contemplating.

In your Foreign Affairs article, page 346, you stress the problems of perception and misperception of another country's military strength. In assessing potential adversaries of the U.S., one would extend the matter of perceptions of strength or weakness to political, economic, social and other elements of a potential adversary's life and vitality as well. How would you as DCI make sure that U.S. perceptions of the USSR, Communist China, and other potential adversaries were clear, accurate, honest, and timely, not just for the President but for the Congress and the people as well?

ANSWER: The short answer to the question is: by doing the job of DCI as well as I can. Moreover, everything that I would do as DCI would be guided by the objective of providing the best possible intelligence to the President in a timely manner, while keeping this Committee and the Congress appropriately informed. I would think it would be for the policy-makers to keep the U.S. public advised in most instances.

In your Foreign Affairs article on page 346, you make some critical comments about presentations and pronouncements made in connection with the budget process of the Government, suggesting there are distortions of actual Soviet strength and Western strength: "...the formidable qualities of the threat are stressed; the available means to counter it perhaps slighted." You urge care in public discussions of these matters. Does that mean that you think that the military and others appearing before the Congress deliberately distort projections made to the Congress and the people for budgetary purposes, and that you want to solve the problem by eliminating such public discussion?

ANSWER: No, indeed. I support the fullest possible public disclosure on relative Soviet and U.S. military strength compatible with U.S. security interests. I think that this Committee appreciates that the sensitivity of the information suggests some of it must come to the Congress in confidence, at least in its details, rather than be published and discussed openly. My point in the article was that we must exercise care so that the American people and our allies, and most of all our potential adversaries do not perceive the rhetoric accompanying budget pleas as an actual reflection of U.S. strength and apprehensions. Such misperceptions could lead to very serious distortions of our real and relative strength vis a vis our adversaries, and you cannot base policy decisions and public opinion on distortions. There the peril is both obvious and indeed grave and one we would all agree on.

Perhaps the central point and single most disturbing comment in your Foreign Affairs article is that "the Soviets' big advantage is in their option to launch a preemptive strike...An attack could be launched with virtually no warning from point-blank range." (Page 350). Though you were writing about a Soviet ship attack on our ships, the possibility of preemptive Soviet attack could come in other forms as well, most ominously a first missile strike. You said -- and this is of particular significance for this Committee -- that "The timeliness and quality of intelligence estimates..." will in part determine whether or not the Soviets can successfully carry out such a preemptive strike. What would you, as DCI, insist upon at CIA and in the Intelligence Community to help provide sufficient warning of such a preemptive Soviet strike?

ANSWER: The Committee will appreciate that, as a Naval officer, my whole professional career has been devoted to trying to help this country be prepared for any eventuality. Intelligence -- accurate foreknowledge and careful assessment of a potential adversary's capabilities and intentions -- is the essential first element of such preparation. As DCI, I would endeavor to guarantee to the President, the Congress, and the American people the highest skills in timely acquisition and analysis of information and the highest honesty and integrity of judgment of which the dedicated people in the Intelligence Community and I myself are capable.

What would you do if the President were to ask you to carry out an order which you believed was illegal?

ANSWER: If I were asked to order CIA to do something that I considered illegal, I would attempt to obtain the withdrawal of the order. If unsuccessful, I would decline to follow it, and would resign if necessary.

Do you belong to any organization, clubs, etc., which have restricted membership?

All CIA employees take a polygraph interview when they enter on duty with the Agency. Would you volunteer to do the same?

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Any of us would be reluctant to refuse a call to office from the President. But the CIA has had three directors in the last four years, and continuity in the DCI's job would seem to be of considerable value. How long will you stay as Director of Central Intelligence? Are you willing to make a career commitment to intelligence?

What is the proper role of a secret intelligence organization in an open society?

ANSWER: Organizations which must operate in secret contravene the spirit of an open society to a degree, yet it is an inconsistency which nearly all Americans recognize as essential. It is one that is well established in the field of national defense, for example. The remedy to the inconsistency is to insure that intelligence agencies are accountable to the established institutions of Government. The agencies must act strictly within their charters, and cannot operate so as to abridge or in any way infringe on the constitutional rights of Americans.

My pledge as DCI would be to have the CIA and the Intelligence Community adhere faithfully to this charge under my direction.

What is your concept of the objective of the central intelligence process?

ANSWER: As I understand it, the intent of Congress in creating the central intelligence process was to establish a focal point in Government where intelligence from all producing agencies would be correlated, evaluated, and coordinated, and disseminated to the upper echelons of the Government for the formulation of appropriate national policies. This centralization would assure that all information vital to the formulation of such policies was provided.

The objective of the central intelligence process is to meet the intelligence needs of the policy-makers as fully, effectively, and efficiently as possible using all intelligence assets and resources of Government. The central intelligence process must be insulated from considerations which in any way would result in biased or unobjective intelligence reporting.

In your Naval service, you have worn two hats from time to time. How comfortable will you be wearing the twin hats of the Director of Central Intelligence, with overall responsibility for the Intelligence Community, and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency? Should one man wear both hats?

ANSWER: I appreciate that there are differences of view on this matter and that the functions of the two jobs are varied and, to some degree, different. At the moment, I do not see any inherent incompatibility. I would note that previous DCIs, as I understand it, have always opposed separating the two jobs after they have done both. I would also add that the DCI is fortunate to have a good amount of expert and excellent assistance in the jobs.

What is your concept of your role as Director of Central Intelligence? Especially with respect to responsibilities to the so-called Intelligence Community? (See attached paper on "Role of DCI").

What is your position as to making public the budget figures of CIA and the Intelligence Community?

ANSWER: My predecessors, I understand, have been against publishing the budget, and I gather that the weight of opinion in the Intelligence Community and at CIA is still against budget disclosure. I value their judgments. However, I would like time to consider this problem and to make my own decision on the impact that disclosure might have, before responding to this question.

What changes need to be made in the National Security Act of 1947?

ANSWER: I would ask the Committee's understanding that I defer responding to this question until I, if confirmed as DCI, have an opportunity to get better-acquainted with the CIA and the Intelligence Community and to get the advice of the President, the NSC, the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, and other elements of the Executive Branch.

I understand that questions have been raised about such matters as the clarification of the role of the DCI vis a vis the Intelligence Community, and some of the language defining the functions and prohibitions placed on the CIA. I understand that this Committee has established a subcommittee to work on the matter of intelligence charters, and I would look forward to working with the subcommittee on any changes that it might propose be made in the statutory authorities of the DCI, CIA and other elements of the Intelligence Community.

Do you support bills which would provide criminal penalties for the unauthorized disclosure of intelligence information and intelligence sources and methods?

ANSWER: I believe that there ought to be further statutory protection of intelligence sources and methods and intelligence information if there are significant gaps in the law. I understand that there are such gaps at the moment. So, I would support appropriate bills to close the gaps, but would ask the Committee to give me some time to become better-acquainted with the nature of the problem and the current laws before giving a definitive response.

What relative roles should civilians and the military have in producing intelligence?

ANSWER: Both civilian agencies and military organizations have important roles in the intelligence process.

Generally speaking, the military forces have special intelligence requirements that are related to their operational and departmental missions and therefore require their own intelligence capabilities. They also make an important contribution, along with the civilian intelligence agencies, to the development of national intelligence.

Coordination mechanisms have evolved over the years to try to avoid unnecessary duplication and to assure full coverage.

The coordination process in the substantive area is probably most important in the production of National Intelligence Estimates. The positions in these estimates are those of the DCI; they are arrived at by a process, during which the positions of all civilian and military intelligence agencies are considered fully. When agreement cannot be reached on the position the DCI judges to be the soundest, either civilian or military agencies may take exception in the estimate itself.

This process allows the policy-makers to make their decisions based on national estimates which fully cover all sides of the issues involved. It is the best assurance that estimates are not slanted or biased either in favor of the military or the civilian agencies.

Question: At the end of the previous session of Congress, a bill was reported to the floor of the Senate which would have established a judicial warrant procedure for electronic surveillance for foreign intelligence purposes. Would you support such legislation?

Answer: I am mindful of the important IV Amendment concerns in the area of electronic surveillance. I understand also that electronic surveillance can be an important device for gathering foreign intelligence and counterintelligence information. I would anticipate working closely with the Congress and components of the Executive Branch, particularly the Department of Justice, to develop legislation that protects constitutional guarantees while preserving this method of gathering foreign intelligence and counterintelligence information.

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You shook the Naval War College from top to bottom during your tenure as its President from 1972 to 1974, and apparently shook up a lot of people in the Navy and outside in the process. You described your action as a "blitzkrieg". Should we brace ourselves for the same kind of shaking of the CIA?

ANSWER: I would wish this Committee and the CIA to know that I am not in favor of change for its own sake; I am in favor of change for the sake of the mission to be accomplished and the people who serve and are served. In that regard, I should note that the Naval War College had been operating in the same manner for some years and that even prior to assuming its Presidency I concluded substantial changes were required. The CIA has just undergone extensive investigations and, as I am told, considerable reorganization in the recent past. Therefore, any changes I would implement would come after considerable thought and discussion. I would also seek and welcome suggestions, from this Committee and the Congress as well as from all other responsible sources.

Some people have suggested that U.S. Ambassadors abroad should get anything they request from their CIA Station Chiefs. Do you agree?

ANSWER: We all recognize that the ambassador is the leader of the Country Team in a foreign country, under the direction of the President. The CIA Station is a part of the team. Should there be a difference between the ambassador and the station chief over an ambassadorial request, I understand that the difference would be referred back to Washington, where I would hope that the Department of State and the CIA would work out an equitable resolution. I foresee no particular problems in this.

What is your position on past CIA practices such as assassination plots and drug testing on unsuspecting people?

ANSWER: I am against such practices. My understanding is that clear instructions prohibiting these activities were issued within the Agency some years ago, and that none is now being practiced. I would note that Executive Order 11905 sets out strict guidelines and prohibitions for intelligence activity.

As DCI, I would insure that those programs and activities undertaken by the CIA were fully within the law of the United States.

How will you insure that abuses that have occurred in the past will not happen again in the future? How will you make sure that you will know what is going on in the CIA?

ANSWER: The best way to avoid the possibility of abuses is to have an effective system of command and control as well as a good internal educational program and appropriate external oversight. I would work for this as DCI. I would continue the policy of recent DCIs in urging employees to bring to my personal attention activity which they believe is inappropriate or illegal.

Though I am necessarily not well-acquainted with current internal CIA practices, I understand that the functions of its Inspector General and its General Counsel have been expanded to help guard against abuses, and that those offices are conducting continuing active programs to insure compliance with law and propriety. Also, I support effective external oversight mechanisms.

There is no question that vigorous supervision and oversight are essential to an intelligence organization. As DCI, I would try to reach the delicate balance necessary to insure the kind of soundly-managed and controlled but imaginative and energetic intelligence system which this country must have.

Are you in favor of making public the names of journalists, academicians, and others who have cooperated with the CIA?

ANSWER: I believe that every American has the right to voluntarily cooperate with his Government, and I would hope that many would continue to want to do so in the future. I do not believe it would be proper for the CIA to release the names of those who have voluntarily cooperated with it in the past, and I believe that this is also a matter of individual privacy.

The GAO does not audit the expenditures of the CIA. Are you willing to allow GAO to conduct audits of CIA activities?

ANSWER: That is a question I will certainly look into. I am not thoroughly acquainted with the rules and procedures of the Congress pertaining to the control and distribution of GAO documents and reports, or the extent to which they are available to the membership and staffs. Any worthwhile GAO study would necessarily cover some very sensitive activities which would require careful protection. I understand that suitable arrangements are being pursued with this Committee.

What are your views of the CIA's reported activities in Micronesia?

ANSWER: I understand that this Committee has held executive session hearings on the press reports of such activity. I don't think it would be appropriate for me to discuss this in open session.

You are familiar with the public controversy over the recent estimate of Soviet military strength and intentions and the A and B team versions. Are you in favor of such competitive analyses by CIA professionals and outsiders?

ANSWER: It has been CIA policy to seek the views of outsiders on substantive matters as well as on analytical methods. This process seems essential for any group which would hope to convince the policy-maker that he is receiving the best possible support from his intelligence advisors. I would hope to continue that policy.

My first reading of the A team/B team estimate leads me to think that this exercise had its merits, and I believe Mr. Bush thought so as well. I do think, however, that the results of such estimates, including the differences which arise between the players, should remain a matter of confidence until properly released by the President. Casual or deliberate public revelations of differences by those who disagree with the main thrust of the findings will probably kill the process.

Do you feel that CIA classifies more information than needs to be classified? If so, what might be done to reduce the amount of information that is classified?

ANSWER: As DCI, I would seek to insure that only those matters needing to be classified were actually classified. The point is that under Executive Order 11905, information must be classified if its disclosure could damage national security and may not be classified if disclosure would not cause damage. The difficulty is always the judgmental one of making the proper determination.

As DCI, I would carefully review programs to identify those which require continued protection and those where a broader disclosure would not be harmful. I would promote rigorous adherence to the directions for classification under Executive Order 11905.

There has been much recent discussion of activities of "friendly" foreign intelligence services in the U.S. Charges have been made that CIA allows these services a free hand in the U.S. in exchange for the privilege of unharassed CIA operations abroad. What is your view of the necessity of liaison arrangements and the propriety of permitting these groups to operate in the U.S., often against U.S. interests?

ANSWER: I have stated that I believe in the necessity of a strong intelligence capability. I understand that part of that capability derives from effective liaison relationships with friendly intelligence services, which are an integral part of the total fabric of official U.S. relations abroad. Significant information is obtained through such liaison, as well as valuable support for intelligence efforts against targets of common concern, such as international terrorism. I will support the practice of maintaining such liaison arrangements in consonance with American foreign policy aims and U.S. law.

With regard to the question of operations of foreign intelligence agents in the U.S., regardless of the country they represent, this is a function of internal security, properly the preserve of the Justice Department and the FBI. In my view, there can be no agreements with any foreign intelligence services which violate U.S. laws, and it is my understanding that there are no agreements or understandings with any foreign intelligence service which authorizes or gives tacit assent to unilateral activities by such services in this country.

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The Congress will henceforth take a continuing critical look at the CIA and the Intelligence Community in fulfillment of its oversight function. This Committee is witness to that determination. Intelligence chiefs are not always fond of Congressional criticism. How would you get along with us as DCI?

ANSWER: I recognize that an important part of my responsibilities as DCI would be to be as responsive as possible to the Congress as it carries out its oversight functions. I appreciate the role of this Committee on behalf of the Senate, and I look forward to a cooperative and fruitful relationship with the Committee and with the Congress as a whole.

I would make every effort to meet congressional needs for substantive information, consistent with my responsibilities to the President and consonant with my statutory responsibilities for protecting intelligence sources and methods.

I understand that my predecessors have had some concern about the number of Congressional committees with which they have dealt. As DCI, I would hope to be able to discuss this with the Committee after I had had an opportunity to become better-acquainted with the current procedures.

You made the following statement in your article in Foreign Affairs of January 1977 on the U.S.-Soviet Naval balance, page 339: "Great wasteful wars have broken out in our century partly because of misperceived comparisons of armed forces." You also are on record as an advocate of net assessments of relative force strength. Would you as DCI pledge to give the Congress and the American people candid and continuing information on this vital and difficult matter of relative U.S. and Soviet military strength?

ANSWER: I understand the Committee's and the Congress' concern for net assessments, and would hope to provide the kind of assessments which are within the province of the CIA and the Intelligence Community to provide. The Committee will appreciate that CIA's interest is and must be in the strength and capabilities of foreign military forces, not U.S. military capabilities, which may limit my opportunity to give you the answers you seek. In many instances, indeed, the only appropriate source may be the President.

What role do you feel Congress should play in covert action operations?

ANSWER: It is my position that Congress should be kept fully informed of covert action operations. As I understand current procedures, Section 662 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, the so-called Hughes/Ryan amendment, requires that any covert action operation be found by the President to be important to the national security and reported in a timely fashion to the appropriate Committees of Congress which currently are Foreign Relations, Appropriations and Armed Services Committees of the Senate, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence; and the International Relations, Appropriations, and Armed Services Committees of the House of Representatives.

I understand there has been some concern within CIA and the Intelligence Community in the past with respect to the current procedures and I would hope to consider these with this Committee if I am confirmed as DCI. One point of concern is the number of Committees that are currently briefed on covert action. The integrity of individual members of Congress is not questioned. There is concern that the wide dissemination of sensitive information on U.S. policy and plans, which results from briefing seven Committees of Congress with some 55 members, is less secure than it might be and I wonder if there is no reasonable alternative. I would like to note in passing the suggestions of the Murphy Commission which favor limiting reporting under Section 662 to a joint Congressional committee on national security.

Is it necessary for the U.S. to conduct covert action and, if so, when should covert action be undertaken?

ANSWER: In a world in which a strong defense capability must be maintained by the U.S., the President must retain every viable option for the protection of our national interests. One such option is covert action. It provides a means of defending ourselves and our allies where diplomacy is insufficient and military action would be ill-advised.

Covert action should be used only where vital American interests are involved; only where prior determination has shown that an overt program would not appropriately accomplish the same purpose; only where the covert action operation had an acceptable chance of success and the risks of exposure were analyzed and found acceptable; and only after the President has found such operation to be important to the national security, and ~~to have reported~~ reported in a timely fashion to the appropriate committees of Congress in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 662 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.